The National Strategies
Secondary

Teaching for progression: Teaching spelling

department for
children, schools and families

Teaching for progression: Teaching spelling

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Contents

Introduction

Why spelling matters

Spelling matters to readers and it matters to writers because it is part of the process of making meaning through the written word. Competence in spelling releases the creativity of the writer. Young writers need to be so confident about their spelling that they can concentrate on composing ideas and making stylistic choices at word and sentence level that reflect the purpose and the context of their writing.

English spelling is more regular than it may seem: there are fewer than 500 wholly irregular words in modern English, but some are words that we use very frequently. Since English spelling is more than 80 per cent predictable, it makes sense to teach spelling systematically, not just incidentally. David Crystal makes that point very clearly in his *Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*:

> *'If the spelling system contains such regularity, why is there a problem? The answer is complex, but a major factor is that children are rarely taught how to spell. They are made to learn spellings by heart, and are rigorously tested on them, but few attempts are made to explain what it is they have learned. They are not generally told why spellings are as they are, or about how these spellings relate to the way words are pronounced. Without such perspective, spelling becomes a vast, boring and time-consuming memory task.'*

D. Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press, 1995, p.272

The revised National Curriculum has the following references to spelling on page 68.

NC Orders: AT3 Writing	Technical accuracy: spell correctly, increasing their knowledge of regular patterns of spelling, word families, roots of words and derivations, including prefixes, suffixes and inflections. This should include applying knowledge of spelling strategies to spell unfamiliar words, and spelling homophones and common polysyllabic words that do not conform to regular patterns.				
	Level 4	**Level 5**	**Level 6**	**Level 7**	**Level 8**
NC AT3: Spell correctly	Spelling, including that of polysyllabic words that conform to regular patterns, is generally accurate	Words with complex regular patterns are usually spelled correctly	Spelling, including that of irregular words, is generally accurate	Spelling is correct, including that of complex irregular words	Spelling is correct, including that of complex irregular words

This resource is intended to support teachers in teaching spelling systematically and enjoyably, in ways which help pupils to develop a positive perspective on themselves as spellers.

Pupils should be encouraged to explore attitudes to spelling, and teachers may initiate discussion with pupils on this topic by reading a thought-provoking poem on spelling by Brian Patten – *Gust Becos I Cud Not Spel*.

This booklet contains a bank of teaching ideas to help in the teaching of word-level objectives which are drawn from substrand 9.3 of the renewed *Framework for secondary English*.

9. Writing:	Writing
	9 Conventions: drawing on conventions and structures
	9.3 Reviewing spelling and increasing knowledge of word derivations, patterns and families (AF8)

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Spell common words correctly

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations*, morphology** and regular spelling patterns | Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence | Spell correctly throughout a substantial text including ambitious or complex polysyllabic words | Review and revise spelling strategies for dealing with words in familiar and unfamiliar contexts or under time or other constraints | Review and revise spelling strategies for dealing with words in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, or when imaginative and ambitious choices are made, or under time or other constraints |

Notes

1. The objectives for Years 7–11 are included here to highlight the progressive nature of the spelling objectives across the secondary curriculum.

2. * derivation – a word derived from another word

3. ** morphology – the study of the way words are built up from roots and affixes (an affix is a group of letters forming part of a word, usually a prefix or a suffix)

4. etymology – the study of the origin and development of words

Pupils will have been taught aspects of this substrand at Key Stage 2, and therefore it is important to use the teaching ideas within this booklet selectively. Year 6 pupils will have been taught how to spell familiar words correctly and employ a range of strategies to spell difficult and unfamiliar words. They will also have studied how to use appropriate strategies to edit, proofread and correct spelling in their own work and on screen. Less confident pupils may therefore need reinforcement and consolidation, while more able pupils should be encouraged to pursue investigations which develop their appreciation of the origins and patterns of English spelling, enabling them to make ambitious word choices in a variety of writing tasks.

Progress for all pupils in substrand 9.3 will be demonstrated by an ability to apply spelling knowledge and conventions with confidence and independence, when spelling increasingly challenging words in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

* Other substrands that have the closest learning relationship with substrand 9.3 are:
    - 7.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of texts on paper and on screen
    - 8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas
    - 8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect
    - 8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact
    - 8.6 Developing and using editing and proofreading skills on paper and on screen
    - 9.1 Using the conventions of standard English
    - 10.1 Exploring language variation and development according to time, place, culture, society and technology
    - 10.2 Commenting on language use.

As links to the language substrands are important, teaching approaches that address those two substrands are followed by a bracket indicating which language substrand is pertinent, for example (L10.1).

Links between substrand 9.3 and functional skills

In working with substrand 9.3, pupils have the opportunity to **build**, **apply**, **transfer** and become **independent** in the functional skills writing standard for Entry 3 and secure the standard for Level 1 and Level 2 by: using correct spelling; checking work for accuracy; writing documents clearly on increasingly complex subjects.

Links between substrand 9.3 and Assessing Pupil Progress (APP)

APP has specific criteria to support the assessment of spelling and this is contained in Appendix 4. The grid details the APP criteria and includes page references to link the criteria to specific activities in this booklet. These can be used to support planning for progression and target setting.

While word-level objectives have been rationalised, it remains important to teach explicitly the spelling conventions, skills and strategies which underpin these objectives to ensure pupils achieve progression in their spelling. In this booklet, the objectives are explored through a number of activities and are approached from different angles to help teachers to embed pupils' understanding. For each objective there are suggested focuses for teaching that objective with the whole class and through group activities, as well as a bank of useful words. At the bottom of each page there are notes which include the rules or conventions themselves.

Teaching spelling objectives from the renewed *Framework for secondary English*

The following focused sets of activities will help pupils to make progress with their spelling in line with the Key Stage 3 spelling objectives, thus securing a firm foundation for Key Stage 4.

Spelling

In order to spell correctly, pupils need to revise, consolidate and secure the following aspects:

1. correct vowel choices, including: vowels with common alternative spellings, e.g. **ay, ai, a–e**; unstressed vowels; the influence of vowels on other letters, e.g. doubling consonants, softening **c**;

2. pluralisation, including **es** endings, and words ending in **y, f** and vowels;

3. word endings, including vowel suffixes such as **ing**; consonant suffixes such as **ful**; modifying words ending in **y** or **e**; making choices between similar endings such as **cian**, **sion** and **tion**;

4. prefixes, including antonym prefixes, e.g. **ir, un**;

5. the spellings of high-frequency words including common homophones;

6. the use of the apostrophe including: omissions; the possessive apostrophe; apostrophising plurals, e.g. *ladies' coat*s, and words ending in **s**; the exception of possessive pronouns;

7. the spellings of key words in each subject.

Spelling strategies

In order to continue learning, constructing and checking spellings, with a view to achieving and sustaining accuracy throughout a substantial text, pupils need to undertake the following regularly:

1. recognise and record personal errors, corrections, investigations, conventions, exceptions and new vocabulary;

2. sound out words phonemically and by syllables;

3. draw on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns;

4. identify words which pose a particular challenge and learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory reinforcement and memorising critical features;

5. use the quartiles of a dictionary and find words beyond the initial letter;

6. make effective use of a spellchecker, recognising where it might not be sufficient or appropriate.

The publication *Teaching for progression: Writing* also provides useful ideas to support teaching and learning related to substrand 9.3.

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Focus 1:
Vowel choices

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure correct vowel choices, including: vowels with common alternative spellings, e.g. **ay**, **ai**, **a–e**; unstressed vowels; the influence of vowels on other letters, e.g. doubling consonants, softening **c**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

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Focus: vowel choices

Whole-class approaches

- Use an interactive whiteboard to identify words that share the same long vowel sound (long **a**, **e**, **i**, **o** or **u**).

- Order words by spelling pattern (see notes below).

- Generate ideas about which spelling is most likely and create guidelines, e.g. long **a** at the end of the word is usually spelled **ay** (*say, play, day, may*, etc.).

- Find the most likely spelling pattern for a long vowel sound in the middle or at the end of a word, or in combination with certain consonants.

- Model to pupils how to keep records of the outcomes of investigations and key words which they find difficult.

Group tasks

- Ask pupils to collect, list and categorise spellings of a long vowel sound by spelling pattern.

- Pupils could investigate:

  - which spelling is most likely at the end of words (**ay**)

  - which spelling is most likely in the middle of words (**ai**)

  - which spelling is most likely in combination with different consonants (**a–e**) For example, when a word contains a long **a** and this is followed by **t** then it is most likely to be spelled **ate**

  - any other patterns they can spot

  - any other ways to spell the phoneme.

- Sort the list of words below to discover the most common spelling patterns for long **i** and **e** phonemes when followed by a **t** phoneme.

- Use letter fans to check knowledge and understanding of vowel phonemes. Pupils show the correct vowel phoneme in response to a spoken word.

beat	cheat	flight	knight	mite	quite	site	tight
beet	eat	fright	light	neat	right	sleet	treat
bite	feet	heat	meat	night	seat	slight	wheat
bleat	fight	height	meet	peat	sheet	spite	white
bright	fleet	kite	might	plight	sight	sweet	write

Consolidate learning through a 'show me' activity using mini-whiteboards. Pupils identify an example and then explain their findings about it.

Notes

- A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. There are around 44 phonemes in English, which may be represented by 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters.

- The long **a** phoneme is spelled in one of three main ways – **ai** (*main*), **ay** (*play*) or **a–e** (*made*).

- The long **e** phoneme is spelled in one of four main ways – **ee** (*wheel*), **ea** (*meal*), **ie** (*thief*) or **e–e** (*mere*).

- The long **i** phoneme is spelled in one of three main ways – **i–e** (*slime*), **y** (*my*) or **igh** (*fight*).

- The long **o** phoneme is spelled in one of three main ways – **o–e** (*phone*), **oa** (*moan*) or **ow** (*show*).

- The long **u** phoneme is spelled in one of three main ways – **u–e** (*tune*), **oo** (*moon*) or **ew** (*flew*).

Focus 1: Vowel choices

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure correct vowel choices, including: vowels with common alternative spellings, e.g. **ay**, **ai**, **a–e**; unstressed vowels; the influence of vowels on other letters, e.g. doubling consonants, softening **c**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Focus: unstressed vowels

Whole-class approaches

- Point out that some vowels are difficult to make out because they are spoken quickly or quietly. They do not 'sound out' clearly because the 'beat' in the word falls elsewhere. Model examples from the list below.

- Select words that contain unstressed vowels and write them on the interactive whiteboard or flipchart. Ask the pupils to work out what the words have in common and why people might have difficulty in spelling them. Circle the vowels that are hard to hear.

- Discuss how the spellings of such words could be memorised, e.g. exaggerated pronunciation or 'spellspeak' where words are broken down into syllables – *diff-er-ence*; thinking of the root word, e.g. *differ* + the suffix *ence*; use of mnemonics, e.g. '*pet* on the car*pet*', '*Al* is in hospit*al*'.

Group tasks

- Pupils work in pairs to develop further ideas/mnemonics for supporting the spelling of words provided in the chart below, e.g. words within words – there's *a rat* in sep*arat*e.

- Ask the pupils to decide on categories for grouping words, e.g. *ary, ery, erence*.

- Pupils work out amusing ways of remembering the spelling of words they find tricky because they include unstressed vowels, and share these with others using mini-whiteboards.

abandoned	conference	easily	generous	library	offering	similar
abominable	consonant	explanatory	geography	literacy	original	skeleton
alcohol	corporal	extra	grammar	literate	parallel	smuggler
animal	deafening	factory	heaven	literature	parliament	stationary
astronomy	definite	familiar	history	locomotive	poisonous	stationery
benefit	definitely	family	holiday	lottery	predict	telephone
boundary	describe	fattening	hospital	margarine	prepare	television
business	description	February	illiterate	marvellous	primary	vegetable
carpet	desperate	flattery	interest	mathematics	prosperous	voluntary
category	dictionary	formal	interested	medicine	reference	Wednesday
Catholic	difference	freedom	January	memorable	Saturday	widening
centre	different	frightening	jewellery	messenger	secretary	
company	disinterest	general	journalist	miniature	separate	
compromise	doctor	generally	lettuce	miserable	signature	

Notes

- Draw pupils' attention to the high number of words that contain the **er** and **en** patterns.

- Helpful tactics:

  - refer to the root;

  - build the word up to detect prefixes, suffixes and syllables;

  - refer to related words, e.g. *definit*e – *finite*;

  - 'spellspeak' words as they might sound, e.g. *Wed-nes-day*.

- Encourage visual learners to devise their own pictures to help with tricky spellings, e.g. draw an ear and then add a letter 'h' for *hear*; draw a bra draped over a bookshelf to denote that there is a *bra* in li*bra*ry.

Focus: doubling consonants

Whole-class approaches

- Explain the convention: words ending with a single consonant preceded by a short vowel double the consonant before adding vowel suffixes such as **ing**, **er**, **est** or **ed**. Collect and display examples.

- Investigation – use the words below to draw a contrast between words that double the final consonant and those that do not. The clue is in the sound of the preceding vowel.

- Consolidate learning by using a 'show me' activity with mini-whiteboards. Give pupils base words and suffixes and ask them to write the base + suffix on their boards. Check which pupils need further support with this convention and set an appropriate target.

Group tasks

- Provide a mixture of base words that were not used in the whole-class activities. Have the pupils work in pairs to provide the correct spellings when adding **ing**, **er**, **ed**, **est** where appropriate.

- Provide pupils with newspaper or magazine articles. Ask them to find, highlight and record words that have consonants doubled where suffixes have been added.

Doubled letters

beg	begged	beggar	hum	humming	hummed
big	bigger	biggest	mop	mopping	mopped
dig	digging	digger	run	runner	running
drag	dragging	dragged	stop	stopper	stopped
drop	dropping	dropped	sun	sunny	sunnier
fit	fitter	fittest	wet	wetter	wettest
hug	hugging	hugged	win	winning	winner

Undoubled letters

beep	beeping	beeped	dream	dreamer	dreaming
blast	blasting	blasted	feel	feeling	feeler
burn	burner	burning	help	helped	helper
count	counter	counted	train	trainer	trained
disgust	disgusted	disgusting	trick	tricky	tricked

Contrasting sets					
dine	dining	dinner	ride	riding	ridden
hide	hiding	hidden	write	writing	written

Notes

- Ensure that pupils understand the difference between short and long vowel sounds.

- When you are providing examples of words with short and long vowel sounds, emphasise or exaggerate the sounding out and have the pupils join in.

- Short (rap) vowel followed by a single consonant = doubles the consonant.

- Long vowel = single consonant.

Focus 1: Vowel choices

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure correct vowel choices, including: vowels with common alternative spellings, e.g. **ay**, **ai**, **a–e**; unstressed vowels; the influence of vowels on other letters, e.g. doubling consonants, softening **c**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: the soft c

Whole-class approaches

- Show lists of words for **ca**, **ce**, **ci**, **co** and **cu** on a whiteboard, and ask pupils to generalise about the way the words sound. Ask pupils to focus on the auditory patterning by asking the question, 'What sound can I hear?' Ask pupils to read aloud to hear the differences and find the patterns.

- Ask pupils to use this method to decide what rules apply for words with the **ca**, **ce**, **ci**, **co** and **cu** pattern, e.g.

  call, calendar, camera, cardigan, carnival, recap

  celery, centimetre, centre, cereal, centipede

  circle, cinema, cinnamon, city, circuit

  coat, cobweb, coffin, cold, column, cow, disco

  cupboard, curtain, custard, customer, cut, discuss

- Have them decide which other **c** group belongs with the **ci** group, i.e. **ce**, because the **c** is softened.

- Consolidate learning using letter fans: pupils hold up correct letters for soft **c** in response to spoken word. Check which pupils are not secure and set an appropriate target.

Group tasks

- Independent investigation – give the pupils a group of cards containing a mix of **c** words and ask them to sort the words and work out the rule about the vowel following **c**.

- Have pupils find as many words as they can from the different **c** + vowel groups.

Ask pupils to find and record examples of **cy** words (which also have the soft **c** sound).

ci					
accident	circuit	circumstance	city	decision	incident
cinema	circular	circus	civil	decisive	incisor
cinnamon	circulation	cistern	decide	disciple	recital
circle	circumference	citizen	decimal	discipline	recite

ce					
ceiling	cellar	cent	century	deceased	discern
celebrate	cellophane	centenary	cereal	deceit	except
celebrity	cement	centigrade	ceremony	December	incense
celery	cemetery	centipede	certain	decent	receive
cell	census	centre	certificate	descend	recent

cy						
bicycle	cyclic	cyclone	cynic	cypress	fancy	mercy
cyanide	cyclist	cylinder	cynical	cyst	lacy	recycle

Notes

- **ci**, **ce** and **cy** usually soften the **c**.

- Exception for **ce** – *celt, celtic* (pronounced as *kelt, keltic*).

Focus 2: Pluralisation

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure pluralisation, including **es** endings, and words ending in **y**, **f** and vowels.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: pluralisation with s/es

Whole-class approaches

- Use an interactive whiteboard to create a list of singular words with their plurals, either by taking suggestions, collecting over time or using the lists below. Ask pupils to group them according to the way they add or change their endings to accommodate the plural.

- Consolidate learning through the use of response cards for **s/es** endings. Pupils show the correct ending in response to a spoken word. Check which pupils are not secure and set an appropriate target.

- Individual notebooks – pupils attempt to apply taught rules in response to a given word.

- Cloze passage featuring deleted plurals.

Group tasks

- Investigation – after establishing the basic 'Add **s**' rule, pupils could conduct an open investigation into other ways of forming plurals.

- Play bingo, featuring cards with pluralisation rules written in the squares. Cards are then drawn featuring different words to be pluralised.

- Design posters or radio commercials to advertise a spelling rule.

Typical words		Hissing and buzzing words	
balloon	balloons	box	boxes
boy	boys	bus	buses
day	days	church	churches
dog	dogs	dish	dishes
girl	girls	fox	foxes
meal	meals	kiss	kisses
school	school	lunch	lunches
sister	sisters	patch	patches
word	words	watch	watches

Notes

- Irregular plurals are dealt with separately elsewhere in the Year 7 spelling bank.

- Most nouns ending in **e** just add **s**, e.g. *shoe, tongue, eye, lane, spade,* but some are irregular, e.g. *mouse, goose.*

- *Fish* is an exception in that an alternative plural is *fish.*

- Nouns ending in hissing, buzzing or shushing sounds (**s/x/ch/sh**) usually add **es** in the plural. This adds a syllable and makes the word easier to say.

Focus: words ending in y

Whole-class approaches

- Discuss and exemplify the convention: when **y** is preceded by a consonant, change to **ies**; when **y** is preceded by a vowel, add **s**.

- Create a list of singular words which end in **y**, with their plurals, by suggestions, collecting over time or using the lists below. Ask pupils to group them according to the way they add or change their endings to accommodate the plural.

- Use response cards or letter fans to show whether pupils choose **s** or **ies** endings. Pupils show the correct plural ending in response to a singular word given by the teacher.

- Individual notebooks – pupils attempt to apply taught rules in response to a given word.

- Cloze passage featuring deleted plurals.

Group tasks

- Play bingo, featuring cards with pluralisation patterns written in the squares. Cards are then drawn featuring different words to be pluralised.

- Design posters or radio commercials to advertise a spelling rule.

Vowel + **y** words		Consonant + **y** words	
boy	boys	baby	babies
buoy	buoys	city	cities
buy	buys	cry	cries
day	days	fly	flies
donkey	donkeys	jelly	jellies
key	keys	lolly	lollies
monkey	monkeys	lorry	lorries
quay	quays	party	parties
tray	trays	puppy	puppies
		try	tries
		worry	worries

Note

- Nouns ending in consonant + **y** change **y** to **i** and add **es**. Compare to nouns ending in vowel + **y**, which simply add **s**.

Focus 2: Pluralisation

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure pluralisation, including **es** endings, and words ending in **y**, **f** and vowels.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: words ending in f and fe

Whole-class approaches

- Create a list of singular words with their plurals, either by suggestions, collecting over time or by using the list below. Invite pupils to group words according to the way their endings change to accommodate the plural.

- Use response cards or mini-whiteboards, which enable pupils to display simultaneous choices of **s/es** for word endings. Check responses to identify a targeted group of pupils for guided work to analyse their pattern of spelling errors and to agree targets and strategies for improvement.

- Individual notebooks: pupils attempt to apply taught rules in response to a given word.

- Cloze passage featuring deleted plurals.

Group tasks

- Investigation – pupils could conduct an open investigation into ways of forming plurals from **f/fe** words.

- Word sums, e.g. *self* + plural = _____

- Play card game or bingo, featuring cards with pluralisation rules written in the squares, and in which cards are drawn featuring different words to be pluralised.

- Design posters or radio commercials to advertise a spelling rule.

f and **fe** endings			
calf	calves	self	selves
half	halves	thief	thieves
life	lives	wolf	wolves
loaf	loaves	knife	knives
scarf	scarves	wife	wives

Note

- Most nouns ending in **f** drop the **f** and add **ves** in the plural. There are exceptions, such as *roofs*. **ff** words just add **s**, e.g. *sniff/sniffs*.

Focus 2: Pluralisation

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure pluralisation, including **es** endings, and words ending in **y**, **f** and vowels.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: plurals of words which end with vowels other than e

Whole-class approaches

- Using food words from below, request *Foods from abroad* and list them in three columns (by endings: **a**, **i**, **o**) with the plural morpheme **s** written in a different colour. Use the same strategy for *Unusual animals of the world* or *Musical words*. (L10.1)

- Generalise about adding endings to words which end in a vowel other than **e**.

- Use singular/plural flashcards for the Pelmanism game. Cards are put face-down and pupils have to remember where they are in order to match up singular and plural forms of a word.

Group task

- Write alliterative alphabetical A–Z poems using plural forms, e.g. *Anacondas are always amazingly anxious/Pizzas are perfect for peckish pupils/Samosas are scrummy for starving school students*.

List 1			
anacondas	emus	paellas	sofas
areas	euros	pagodas	solos
armadillos	fiestas	patios	sombreros
bananas	galas	pianos	sonatas
banjos	geckos	piazzas	tarantulas
bhajis	gnus	piccolos	tattoos
bongos	gurus	pizzas	tombolas
cameras	haikus	pumas	umbrellas
casinos	igloos	radios	violas
cellos	jumbos	risottos	visas
chapat(t)is	kangaroos	rotas	yo-yos
concertos	kimonos	sambas	zoos
corgis	kiwis	samosas	Zulus
cuckoos	magnolias	saunas	
dahlias	matzos	siestas	
discos	oratorios	skis	

List 2			
buffaloes	echoes	potatoes	volcanoes
cargoes	haloes	tomatoes	
dingoes	heroes	torpedoes	
dominoes	mangoes	vetoes	

List 3			
antennae	fungi	phenomena	strata
bacteria	macaroni	ravioli	tagliatelle
criteria	paparazzi	spaghetti	

Notes

- Most nouns ending in **o** form their plural by adding **s**, especially musical terms, words recently introduced from other languages and abbreviations. There are some exceptions to this rule, when **es** is added to form the plural (List 2). Words ending in two vowels usually add **s**. Three consecutive vowels are unusual, e.g. *beau/beaux*.

- A few words keep the plural spelling of the original language (List 3). Some pasta terms are already plurals in Italian. Many words borrowed from other languages use a number of different spellings, e.g. *matzos*.

- Make use of words from the range of languages you have in your classroom.

Focus: irregular plurals

Whole-class approaches

- On a whiteboard, create a list of singular words with irregular plurals, either by suggestions, collecting over time or by using the list below. Invite pupils to group them according to the way their endings change to accommodate the plural.

- Use a cloze passage featuring deleted plurals as the basis for class discussion.

- Model for pupils a short presentation explaining a strategy devised to overcome a spelling difficulty. Pupils devise and present their own, using whiteboards.

Group tasks

- Pupils could conduct an open investigation into ways of forming plurals.

- Play a card game or bingo, featuring cards with different pluralisation patterns written in the squares. Cards are then drawn featuring different words to be pluralised.

- Create posters for each of these:

    - words that have no singular (e.g. *trousers, scissors*);

    - words that are the same in the singular and plural (e.g. *sheep, deer*);

    - plurals with endings other than **s** (e.g. *mice, men*);

    - plurals of words ending in **is** (e.g. *crises, emphases*).

Irregular plurals			
antenna	antennae	louse	lice
child	children	man	men
deer	deer	mouse	mice
foot	feet	sheep	sheep
formula	formulae	tooth	teeth
goose	geese	woman	women
larva	larvae		

Note

- A number of nouns have unusual plurals. Some change the medial vowel (*goose/geese*); some have retained the plural form of the original language (**a** singular, **ae** plural in Latin).

Focus: vowel suffixes

Whole-class approaches

- Create class collections of words with common vowel suffixes and group them (see table below).

- Investigation – explore patterns, base words and generalisations about spellings, e.g. Why is 'islander' *island* + **er** but 'voyager' *voyag* + **er**? What do the suffixes mean?

- Use starter activities to give pupils practice in investigating the answers to such key questions or in exploring spelling patterns under timed conditions.

Group task

- Weaker spellers play matching cards – matching the root word to its suffix.

al	ary	ic	ist	ive	er	est
additional	anniversary	acidic	artist	alliterative	baker	cleverest
exceptional	dictionary	allergic	balloonist	alternative	driver	driest
medical	library	analytic	dramatist	apprehensive	farmer	fiercest
national	missionary	comic	extremist	comprehensive	islander	funniest
occasional	necessary	dramatic	instrumentalist	corrective	manager	handsomest
personal	revolutionary	energetic	journalist	derivative	poorer	nastiest
seasonal	stationary	horrific	machinist	discursive	reader	neatest
sensational		manic	novelist	exhaustive	richer	poorest
		photographic	specialist	explosive	teenager	richest
		scientific	stockist	investigative	villager	strongest
		terrific	violinist	retrospective	voyager	tallest

Notes

- If the root word ends in an **e** then it is usually dropped before a vowel suffix is added, e.g. *voyage/voyager*.

- Words ending in a consonant + **y** drop the **y** and change to **i** when a vowel suffix is added, e.g. *funniest*.

Focus: consonant suffixes

Whole-class approaches

- Create class collections of words with common consonant suffixes and group them (see table below).

- Collect examples of other consonant suffixes, e.g. **ness**, **like**, **hood**, **ship**, **ment,** etc.

- Investigation – seek patterns, base words and generalisations about spellings. What do the suffixes mean?

- Draw together groups of words created by adding different suffixes to a base word, e.g. *careful, careless, carefully* and explore their meanings.

Group tasks

- Weaker spellers play matching cards – matching the root word to its suffix.

- Investigate how many multiple suffixes groups can find, e.g. *worthlessness*.

ly	ful	less
actually	beautiful	careless
especially	forgetful	endless
eventually	hateful	fearless
friendly	hopeful	headless
kindly	merciful	homeless
likely	painful	jobless
originally	pitiful	lifeless
personally	resentful	merciless
properly	sorrowful	speechless
really	successful	thankless
weekly	wishful	thoughtless

Notes

- **ly**, **ful** and **less** are consonant suffixes. Consonant suffixes can generally be added without changing the base word but there are exceptions, e.g. *wholly*, and words ending in a consonant + **y**, which usually change to an **i**, e.g. *happiness*.

- **ly** means 'in this manner'.

- **ful** means 'full of '.

- **less** means 'without'.

Focus 3: Word endings

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure word endings, including vowel suffixes such as **ing**; consonant suffixes such as **ful**; modifying words ending in **y** or **e**; making choices between similar endings such as **cian**, **sion** and **tion**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: words ending in y

Whole-class approaches

- Using a whiteboard, sort words shown below and work out the rule for words ending in consonant + **y**.

- Fill in a word grid (like the first batch of words below), halting at the modified letters to generalise.

- Demonstrate the adding of suffixes, then give pupils a key word (e.g. *funny*) to work on in their notebooks.

- Investigate words ending in vowel + **y**.

Group tasks

- Pupils work in pairs to fill in or complete a prepared grid.

- Investigation – sorting words and generalising.

- Finding the obvious and less obvious suffixes which are added to verbs (see second batch below). (L10.1)

Extension activity

- Investigate whether the final letter changes in any other words ending in **y** when adding a suffix.

empty	emptier	emptiest	emptily	emptiness
happy	happier	happiest	happily	happiness
heavy	heavier	heaviest	heavily	heaviness
hungry	hungrier	hungriest	hungrily	
lazy	lazier	laziest	lazily	laziness
pretty	prettier	prettiest	prettily	prettiness
ready	readier	readiest	readily	readiness
trendy	trendier	trendiest	trendily	trendiness
windy	windier	windiest	windily	

ally	allying	allied	alliance
carry	carrying	carried	carriage
marry	marrying	married	marriage
modify	modifying	modified	modification
reply	replying	replied	reply
supply	supplying	supplied	supplier
try	trying	tried	trial
vary	varying	varied	variety

Notes

- To add a suffix to a consonant + **y** word, change the **y** to an **i** first. To add a suffix to a vowel + **y** word, just add the suffix.

- An important exception is adding **ing** – it would be very odd to have a word containing a double **i**, and difficult to say. (*Skiing* is an exception.)

- Only one other final consonant, **f**, changes when adding a suffix (though letters can double).

Focus: modifying words ending in e

Whole-class approaches

- Collect examples of words with suffixes, and generalise about their effects on the base word if it ends in **e**. Use the patterns to generate additional examples that belong in those groups.

- Hold up a base word on a card and ask pupils to suggest and show suitable suffixes.

- Explore together the effect of adding vowel/consonant suffixes to words ending in **e**.

Group task

- Explore how adding the **ly** consonant suffix can change the function of a verb into an adverb – *love* + **ly** = *lovely*; *forceful* + **ly** = *forcefully*. Consolidate learning about **ly** suffix/adverbs by using a 'show me' activity with whiteboards. Check for pupils who will need further support through guided work and set an appropriate target.

- Play 'Find the word', e.g. 'Which **ful** means "longing for something"?' (*hopeful*) You could differentiate this activity by asking some pupils to set their own questions for these words and then add some further words and questions of their own.

Some words as starting points for investigation					
article	force	hope	poke	shame	time
attainable	frame	life	possible	sure	tune
bike	free	like	programme	tackle	use
care	game	lone	rake	take	voyage
cycle	hassle	make	realise	tangible	wrestle
fake	home	nice	rule	terrorise	wrinkle

Notes

- If a word ends in **e**, avoid the double **e** by dropping one as necessary.

- Words ending in **e** usually drop the **e** when adding a vowel suffix, e.g. *take/taking*.

- Words ending in **e** keep **e** when adding a consonant suffix, e.g. *hope/hopeful*; *love/lovely*.

- Pupils may need reminding that a modifying **e** is part of a vowel digraph, which makes a long vowel sound on the preceding vowel.

Focus: able **and** ible

Whole-class approaches

- In shared reading and writing, identify words with these suffixes and build class collections organised under common headings (see lists below).

- Investigation – identify the root words. What changes have been made to these roots before adding the suffix? What generalisations can be made about rules, e.g. 'What happens if the root word ends in **e** or in **y**? Why *touchable* but not *stopable*?' (L10.1)

- Write two lists for **able** and **ible** in response to the saying of words taken from the lists below.

- Consolidate learning through the use of letter fans. Pupils show correct letter endings in response to spoken word.

Group task

- Find ways of learning exceptions to the claim that dropping **able** usually leaves a recognisable stem word.

ible	able
credible	adorable
edible	agreeable
forcible	breakable
horrible	disposable
indestructible	enjoyable
invincible	enviable
legible	identifiable
possible	manageable
responsible	miserable
reversible	probable
susceptible	reliable
tangible	respectable
terrible	valuable

Notes

- Final **e** deletion is common in the root word, e.g. *reversible, valuable*, unless it is retained to preserve a soft **g** or **c**, e.g. *manageable, noticeable*.

- **able** endings are more common than **ible** ones. There is no clear 'rule' but one way of distinguishing between these endings is that dropping **able** often leaves a generally recognisable word, e.g. *agreeable*; dropping **ible** often leaves a stem, e.g. *legible*. If one can say '*I am able to…*', then the suffix is more likely to be **able** than **ible**.

Focus: ful suffixes

Whole-class approaches

- Word search in text, or take suggestions. Work out the rule with pupils: **ll** in *full* becomes **l** when used as a suffix.

- Collect compound words of which one element is **ful**.

Group task

- Investigate what happens to words ending in **y** when the suffix **ful** is added.

Typical **ful** words					
boast	boastful	fear	fearful	play	playful
care	careful	hand	handful	scorn	scornful
colour	colourful	harm	harmful	shame	shameful
doubt	doubtful	hope	hopeful	thank	thankful
faith	faithful	mouth	mouthful	wake	wakeful

y words					
beauty	beautiful	fancy	fanciful	pity	pitiful
bounty	bountiful	mercy	merciful	plenty	plentiful

Notes

- Drop the **l** when adding **ful**.

- Change **y** to **i** when adding **ful** to words which end in consonant + **y**.

- Distinguish between 'a hand full of ' and 'a handful of '. The first refers to the hand, the second refers to the quantity.

- **full**, **all** and **till** usually drop the second **l** when they are suffixes, e.g. *beautiful, typical, until*.

Focus: words ending with cian, sion and tion

Whole-class approaches

- Make class collections of 'shun' words. Categorise them according to word ending (see lists below).

- Develop and draw out patterns leading to general rules determining spelling pattern (see Notes below).

- Give a base word and ask pupils to write the correct 'shun' suffix on whiteboards, e.g. *educate, magic*. Alternatively, use a 'shun' fan for pupils to show in response. Check understanding and identify which pupils require specific targets and/or guided work on this aspect.

Group tasks

- Word building – record roots and suffixes for 'shun' words on separate lists; pupils have to match roots and suffixes to complete words correctly.

- Sorting activities – sort cards into lists, depending on the preceding vowel, e.g. *ation, etion*, etc. Generalise and explain (see Notes).

cian	sion	ssion	tion	other
dietician	collision	discussion	attention	Asian
electrician	confusion	mission	diction	ocean
magician	corrosion	oppression	direction	Russian
musician	exclusion	passion	faction	Venetian
optician	explosion	percussion	fiction	
physician	extension	possession	fraction	
politician	infusion	profession	proportion	
	transfusion	session	reduction	

ation	etion	ition	otion	ution
demonstration	completion	competition	devotion	constitution
education	deletion	intuition	emotion	contribution
foundation	depletion	opposition	lotion	distribution
nation	secretion	petition	motion	institution
station		position	notion	pollution
translation		repetition	promotion	revolution

Notes

- **cian** – where words end in **c** they are usually related to people: common for occupations and identity.

- **tion** – the most common ending.

- **sion** – where the base word ends in **d/de** or **s/se** (e.g. *explode, confuse*).

- **ssion** – clear soft 'sh' sound.

- **ation** – long **a** is usually followed by **tion**.

- **otion/ution/etion** – the base word usually contains the vowel, clearly pronounced.

- **ution** words are usually longer than three syllables; **usion** words tend to be shorter.

Focus: antonym prefixes

Whole-class approaches

- Display a list of words on the whiteboard beginning with these prefixes and teach their meanings directly (see Notes).

- Look out for words in shared texts which have any of these prefixes. Cover or delete these words and ask pupils to work out the relevant prefix. Consolidate learning through a 'show me' activity using whiteboards or letter fans.

- Teacher provides the root word and pupils write down a suitable prefix.

Group tasks

- Pupils scan real texts, e.g. adverts, newspapers, and highlight words with these prefixes.

- In pairs, pupils select and test each other on the spelling and meaning of words listed.

- Pupils produce a 'new' list of words to promote an imaginary product, e.g. *anti-burglar, anti-frizz*. They create an advertisement for a product and present this to the class, explaining their choice of prefixes and their meanings.

- Investigate the use and meanings of **dis** and **de**.

Extension activity

- Produce a set of insults for use in a drama activity in which pupils bandy insults in a row, choosing words from the lists below. Compare them with the insults that Shakespearean characters throw at each other, e.g. Capulets and Montagues in the first act of *Romeo and Juliet*. (L10.1)

in	im	ir	il	mis	non	un	anti
inaccurate	immature	irrational	illegal	misbehave	non-drip	unfortunate	antibiotic
inactive	immobile	irregular	illegible	miscalculate	non-fiction	unfounded	antibody
inattentive	impatient	irresistible	illiterate	miscount	nonsense	unhelpful	anticlimax
incapable	impolite	irresponsible		misdeal	non-smoker	unlikely	anticline
inconvenient	impossible			misfire	non-starter	unrealistic	anticlockwise
incredible	impractical			misfortune	non-stick	unreasonable	antifreeze
indecent	improbable			mishear	non-stop		anticyclone
	improper			misinform	non-violent		antihero
				misplace			antiseptic
				misread			
				mistake			

Notes

- **mis** means 'wrong', 'false'; **non** means 'not', 'opposite of'; **anti** means 'against'; **ir** means 'not'; **il** means 'not'; **im** means 'not'; **in** means 'not'; **un** means 'not' or 'opposite of'.

- New hyphenated words are appearing all the time, especially in advertising.

- Note that double letters are often created when the prefix is added to a word beginning with the letter which ends the prefix.

- Remember the **ante** prefix in words like *antediluvian* or *anteroom*.

- **Im** precedes words starting with **p** as well as words starting with **m**.

Focus 4: Prefixes

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure prefixes, including antonym prefixes, e.g. **ir**, **un**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: common prefixes

Whole-class approaches

- Ask for two examples for every prefix and collect these onto the whiteboard.

- Match up lists of 'prefixes' and 'meanings' taken from the table that follows.

- Write down ten words from the list of root words in the table, and ask pupils to make up new words by adding different prefixes. Do they sound correct? Which words are more likely to be correct? How do we know? How can we check?

Group tasks

- Match prefixes with meanings: Invite pupils to match them up by working out their meanings from known words.

- Play the 'un' game: pupils tell a prefix story in pairs. The first person starts with a sentence beginning with an **un** word (e.g. *Unfortunately, the dragon's eye was open.*) The partner responds by removing the prefix (e.g. *Fortunately, the princess was invisible at the time.*), etc.

Extension activity

- Thesaurus work:

    – look up *beautiful* – list synonyms and experiment with adding prefixes;

    – make a list of 'bad behaviour' words and present at plenary – *unhelpful, antisocial, misbehaviour.*

Prefixes and meanings				Roots to work with	
anti	against	inter	between	act	make
bi	two	mis	wrong	awaken	marine
contra	against	non	not	clean	place
de	undo	pre	before	dead	sleep
in	not	sub	under	face	visit
pro	ahead	sus	under	grow	write
re	again	un	not	live	
ex	out of				

Notes

- Remembering prefixes and their meanings helps both spelling and vocabulary.

- **sus** – a version of **sub** meaning 'under'.

Focus 4: Prefixes

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure prefixes, including antonym prefixes, e.g. **ir**, **un**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

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Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

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Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: a prefixes

Whole-class approaches

- Display lists of words on a whiteboard (see table that follows), and teach the meanings of the prefixes, thus teasing out the meanings of the words.

- List prefixes and roots and, using mini-whiteboards, ask pupils to join up and define words which use both.

Group task

- Ask groups to devise a hundred-word story including at least ten words with **a** prefixes. Suitable titles include *Sea-Saga*, *Battle* or *Summer Garden*.

Extension activities

- Ask pupils to look for older poetry, which may use words like *abloom*, *aglitter*. (L10.1)

- Skim through a dictionary, looking for new words to add to the lists below – these must hold to the meaning of the prefix.

ad	al	a		ab
addition	almighty	aboard	abide	abandon
adjacent	almost	afield	ablaze	abdicate
adjective	alone	aground	abloom	abduct
adjoin	already	alert	afloat	aberrant
adjust	alright	aloft	aglitter	abjure
admire	also	amoral	alive	abscond
advance	although	apart	another	abseil
advent	altogether	astride	around	absolve
adverb	always	awake	asleep	
advise		away	atonal	

Notes

- **ad** means 'towards' – just add; **al** means 'all' + base word – drop one of the **l**s; **a** means 'in a state of' (many words in the a list above have a sense of 'on' or 'in') – but it can also reverse the meaning as in *amoral* or *atonal*; **ab** means 'away from'.

- Teach words within words, e.g. **an** + *other* = *another*.

Focus: classical prefixes

Whole-class approaches

- Write up the prefixes, divide the class into groups, each with a particular prefix, and ask pupils to write down as many words as they can, in two minutes, for their prefix. Ask pupils to work out the meaning of the prefix, and teach if unknown. (L10.1)

- Play Speedy Dictionaries – pairs race against a 30-second deadline to locate a word and the origin of its prefix in the dictionary.

Group tasks

- Collect words with similar prefixes – who can list the most?

- Play sorting games – for language of origin, for same prefix, scientific words, words linked to movement, etc.

- Search the dictionary for new phrases like 'automatic focus', 'automatic door'.

- Search science, maths and geography textbooks for examples of words in context.

- Do a *Yellow Pages* wordsearch for companies which use prefixed words as a company name, e.g. AutoGlaze. Try travel and transport companies, etc.

- Make links with other languages: words for motorways = *autoroute* (French); *autobahn* (German); *autopista* (Spanish); *autoput* (Serbo-Croat). (L10.1)

auto	circum	bi	tele	trans	micro
autobiography	circle	biceps	telegenic	transatlantic	microcosm
autodidact	circular	bicycle	telegraph	transfer	microfilm
autograph	circulate	bifocals	telepathy	translate	micrometer
automatic	circumference	bilingual	telephone	transmit	microphone
automaton	circumnavigate	biped	telephoto	transparent	microscopic
automobile	circumstance	biplane	telescope	transplant	micro-skirt
autopsy	circumvent	bisect	television	transport	
	circus				

aqua	aero	audi	re	prim	super
aquaplane	aerodrome	audible	reconsider	primary	superman
aquarium	aerodynamics	audience	repeat	primate	supernatural
Aquarius	aeronaut	audition	replay	prime	supernova
aquatic	aeroplane	auditorium	reply	primrose	superpower
					supersede

Notes

- **auto** means 'self'; **circum** means 'round', 'about'; **bi** means 'two' or 'twice'; **tele** means 'distant'; **trans** means 'across'; **super** means 'greater'; **micro** means 'small'; **aqua** means 'water'; **aero** means 'air'; **audi** means 'hear'; **re** means 'again', and **prim** means 'first'.

- Use multicultural opportunities, drawing on the range of languages in the classroom. (L10.1)

Focus: common letter clusters

Whole-class approaches

- Make class lists of words that contain common letter strings but are pronounced differently. Make connections to words that follow the same pattern (e.g. *near* and *hear*; *bear* and *wear*).

- Identify overlaps (e.g. *clear* and *pier*) and discuss and generate strategies for avoiding confusion (e.g. *I measured the* <u>height</u> *and* <u>weight</u> *of* <u>eight</u> *people*).

- Use **look/say/remember/cover/write/check** as a class activity for problem words.

Group tasks

- Use crossword dictionaries and other resources to create lists of words with common letter strings but different pronunciations. Try **ough**, **ight**.

- Investigation – identify patterns:

  - Which pronunciation is the most common?

  - Which pronunciation is the least common?

  - Do pronunciations follow any patterns? (Try looking at position in word, letters preceding and letters following.)

- Identify mnemonics and other tricks to avoid potential confusions, e.g. *tough* and *stuff*.

our	ough	ear	ight	ice	aus
armour	cough	bear	bright	Alice	Australia
flour	drought	dear	eight	apprentice	Austria
hour	enough	dreary	fight	dice	because
journey	plough	earn	freight	mice	cause
mourn	rough	fear	height	nice	clause
ourselves	slough	gear	light	notice	claustrophobia
pour	thorough	hear	might	police	pause
sour	though	hearth	night	practice	sausage
tour	thought	learn	right	rice	
your	through	wear	sight	spice	
	tough	weary	tight	twice	
	trough		weight		
	wrought				

Notes

- Note that accent and dialect have an effect on how words are pronounced in a locality.

- A feature of our sound-spelling system is that the same letter string can often be used to code more than one phoneme. In some cases the number of words involved is so small that they can be learned almost as isolates, e.g. there are only five words that end in *eight*. The most common sound is shared by *eight*, *weight* and *freight*; the other two words are *height* and *sleight*. Even the groups which are more numerous are within reasonable limits. For example, the group showing the greatest range of pronunciation in the table above is *ough*. Investigation will show that the number of <u>common</u> words that follow some of those models is quite small, e.g.

    - *through*, *lough* and *drought* – one case of each;

    - *trough* – two cases (*trough*, *cough*);

    - *plough* – three cases (*bough*, *plough*, *slough*).

Focus: homophones

Whole-class approaches

- Set up an investigation of high-frequency homophones. Teach words and meanings directly, and display.

- Delete homophones in shared texts and ask pupils to work out which one fits.

- Pupils write the correct spelling in response to a sentence in which the meaning is clear. To consolidate learning, pupils should draw up lists of such words and devise ways of remembering them. Examples of common errors can be found on at the end of Appendix 1 in this booklet.

Group tasks

- Use 'show me' card starter activities to identify quickly which pupils still have problems with high-frequency homophones.

- Invent mnemonics and ways of working out the correct choice and share these with others using whiteboards or posters.

- Differentiate this activity by asking pupils to collect homonyms (same spelling, different meanings, e.g. *bear, bow, lead, live, row, sow, tear, wind, wound*). Pupils can present three of the words they have found, explaining their meaning to others.

- Research the history of words to explain the origin of some homophones. (L10.1)

by	buy	bye	sew	so	sow
cent	scent	sent	their	they're	there
rein	rain	reign	too	two	to
rode	road	rowed	you	yew	ewe

aloud	allowed	him	hymn	peace	piece
are	our	hole	whole	place	plaice
beach	beech	hour	our	plane	plain
bean	been	in	inn	read	reed
blue	blew	key	quay	right	write
board	bored	knight	night	scene	seen
break	brake	knot	not	see	sea
cell	sell	know	no	stair	stare
cereal	serial	leak	leek	steel	steal
dear	deer	made	maid	sum	some
fate	fete	main	mane	sun	son
flour	flower	meet	meat	tail	tale
grate	great	might	mite	through	threw
hair	hare	morning	mourning	vain	vein
herd	heard	new	knew	waist	waste
here	hear	pane	pain	week	weak

Notes

- Many homophone choices are best taught as a grammatical issue, e.g. *there/their* or through a focus on meaning, e.g. *here/there/where* are all related to place.

- Note that analogy with family groups can be helpful, e.g. *ear, hear, hea*rd; here, *where, there*.

- Pronunciation varies: *are/our* are homophones in some areas, but not in others.

Focus: common roots

Whole-class approaches

- Provide and explain a root, then collect examples.

- Provide a list of words using the same root, and ask pupils to deduce the meaning.

- In shared reading and writing, identify words built around common roots.

- Create word webs showing words related to a common root.

Group tasks

- Use dictionaries and other word lists to create collections of words with common roots. (A rhyming dictionary will help to uncover words where the common root is at the end.)

- Use an etymological dictionary to create charts showing word links and origins. (L10.1)

Words derived from other languages		
from *graphein* – write graph photograph	from *annus* – year annual anniversary	from *dictare* – to say dictator dictionary
from *mikro* – small microscope microlight	from *manus* – hand manual manuscript	from *mort* – dead mortgage mortuary
from *octo* – eight octagon octopus	from *aqua* – water aquarium aqueduct	from *roi* – king royal royalty
from *skopein* – to see telescope microscope	from *unus* – one unit union	from *presse* – press express pressure
from *ge* – earth geology geography	from *insula* – island insulation peninsula	from *voix* – voice voice vocal

Note

- Many roots are derived from languages other than English, particularly Greek, Latin and French. Investigation of these roots can make plain commonalities in spelling which phonology sometimes obscures (e.g. the link between *reign* and *sovereign*).

Focus: word families and spelling patterns

Whole-class approaches

- Using the charts below, provide some examples of word families and derivations on the board or flipchart. Provide further examples of word roots and ask pupils to think of words that are derivations. Record these next to the root words, explaining that many words in the English language are derived from other words and this can provide a clue to their spelling. (L10.1)

- Explain that many word roots and derivations are drawn from Latin and Greek, and provide examples. With guidance, pupils can investigate the reasons why these two languages have had such an influence on the English language.

- Create class word webs.

Group tasks

- Provide each group with lists of roots and associated words. Ask pupils to list the words in their relevant families or groups.

- Pupils can develop their own card games, e.g. Beat Your Neighbour for groups of four. Twenty word roots and forty derivations (two per word root) are put on to cards. Each pupil starts with five word roots. The forty cards of derivations are placed face-down in the middle of the table and pupils take it in turns to select a word. Unwanted words are placed at the bottom of the pile. The first pupil to collect three sets of word roots and their derivations, and spell all the words in the sets (from memory), wins the game. (L10.2)

act	actor	action	activity	react	reaction
child	children	childhood	childlike	childish	childless
electric	electrical	electricity	electrician	electronic	electrocute
sign	signatory	signature	signal	resign	resignation
take	mistake	mistaken	overtaken	overtaking	partaking

assist	assistant	assistance	**machine**	machinery	machinist
balance	imbalance	unbalanced	**medic**	medical	medication
bore	boring	boredom	**obey**	disobey	disobedient
call	recall	calling	**operate**	cooperate	cooperation
claim	reclaim	reclamation	**pack**	packet	package
cover	discover	discovery	**pain**	painkiller	painstaking
examine	examination	examiner	**pass**	passage	passenger
give	given	forgiveness	**press**	impress	depression
govern	governor	government	**prison**	imprisoned	imprisonment
hand	handler	handicraft	**prove**	approval	disapprove
hero	heroic	heroism	**public**	publication	publicity
joy	joyful	enjoyment	**relate**	relative	relation
light	lightning	delighted	**shake**	shakily	shaken

Note

- Encourage use of etymological dictionaries and thesauruses to support pupils in finding/spelling derivations of words and their origins (L10.1).

Focus: high-frequency words

Whole-class approaches

- On the whiteboard, OHP or flipchart, play What Follows? Start with the first letter of a high-frequency word that pupils find difficult, and ask them to guess which letter follows. If they suggest a continuation which is possible, but not the one required, ask for examples which prove that it is a possible letter combination. If they can provide the examples, write them up and carry on. Eventually it will become obvious which letter(s) must follow. The 'teacher' scores points each time a non-viable letter sequence is suggested.

- Give individual target words to pupils, and test them by saying, 'Write down your first/second/third target word.' Construct success for all.

- Identify the high-frequency words most often spelled incorrectly by members of the class. Together, work out ways of remembering them. Include words which do not feature elsewhere in *Teaching spelling.*

Group tasks

- Establish 'spelling partners': pairs of pupils who help each other to learn their target words, using the **look/say/remember/cover/write/check** routine, mnemonics and mutual testing.

- Make posters of high-frequency words which include complex letter clusters/'tricky trigraphs'.

- Model the process of identifying a 'tricky word' and the development of a learning strategy that is appropriate for the word and the learner. Pupils then establish a 'tricky words' section in their spelling journals, which not only lists the words they need but also links each one with an appropriate strategy for memorisation.

Note

- See Appendix 1: Spelling list.

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**Focus 6:
Apostrophes**

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure the use of the apostrophe, including: omissions; the possessive apostrophe; apostrophising plurals, e.g. *ladies' coats*, and words ending in **s**; the exception of possessive pronouns.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

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Focus: apostrophes for omission

Whole-class approaches

- Display or write newspaper headlines which feature contraction apostrophes. Highlight the apostrophes. Review and, if necessary, teach the use of the apostrophe for omission. Invite pupils to try placing apostrophes in words already contracted, but with the apostrophe removed. Emphasise that the apostrophe represents missing letters and not the joining of the two words.

- List the full forms. Invite the pupils to contract. Also try this vice versa – offer the contraction and invite pupils to expand.

- Generalise about the type of words that attract contractions (verbs and pronouns) from a list.

Group tasks

- Check own written work.

- Contrast written forms where apostrophised forms are used or not.

- Discuss why a writer might choose an apostrophised form rather than the full form.

Pronouns				Other contractions		
I'm	I'll	I've	I'd	aren't	haven't	won't
you're	you'll	you've	you'd	can't	ma'am	
he's	he'll	he's	he'd	couldn't	o'clock	
she's	she'll	she's	she'd	doesn't	shan't	
we're	we'll	we've	we'd	don't	'tis	
they're	they'll	they've	they'd	hadn't	weren't	

Notes

- The contractions in this list are drawn from high-frequency word lists.

- Apostrophes are usually used where two words have been joined and some letters missed out so that a contraction is formed.

- Note the homophone issue (*its/it's, there's/theirs*).

- Contractions occur more frequently in informal language and in dialogue.

- *Won't* and *shan't* are unusual because the base words have been modified.

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Focus 6: Apostrophes

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure the use of the apostrophe, including: omissions; the possessive apostrophe; apostrophising plurals, e.g. *ladies' coats*, and words ending in **s**; the exception of possessive pronouns.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell most words correctly including some complex polysyllabic words and unfamiliar words

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

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Focus: possessive pronouns

Whole-class approaches

- Explain the term 'pronoun'. Write on the whiteboard or flipchart an incomplete list of possessive pronouns. Ask pupils to complete the pattern then discuss what the pronouns have in common, e.g. they tell us who things belong to; they don't use people's names; they represent people's names. Identify the function of the words.

- In shared reading and writing, invite pupils to substitute pronouns for nouns, and to notice when writers have done so.

- If possible, find a text with examples of *its* and *it's*. Discuss the difference. Try deleting or covering examples and asking pupils to work out the correct version.

- Work out ways of distinguishing between the two, e.g. If you can substitute *it is*, then the correct form is *it's*. Another way might be to think of the apostrophe in *it's* as the top of the missing letter *i*.

- Use 'show me' response cards or mini-whiteboards during a starter activity. Ask pupils to choose between *it's* and *its* in sample sentences which are read or said.

Group tasks

- Investigate the pattern by which the words in column 2 of the table below are followed by nouns, whereas those in column 3 stand alone.

- Pronoun hunt – where in sentences do pronouns tend to occur? How do they work in relation to the named person?

- Create lines or poems based on possessive pronouns, e.g. '*your loss, my lucky find*'.

- Use cloze passages to distinguish between *its* and *it's*.

Extension activities (L10.1)

- Research older forms of pronouns, e.g. *thee/thine*.
- Research pronouns in other languages, e.g. *ta/ton*; *mein/meine*.

1	2	3
I	my	mine
you	your	yours
he	his	his
she	her	hers
it	its	its
we	our	ours
they	their	theirs

Note

- *It's* = it is; *its* = belonging to it.

Focus: apostrophes for possession (singular and plural)

Whole-class approaches

- Draw attention to the uses of apostrophes during shared reading and writing.

- Use response cards; give each pupil a pair of cards with wording such as:

one person	more than one person

Pupils display a card in response to an example spoken or shown by the teacher. Identify pupils who are not secure and set an appropriate target or undertake guided group work.

Notes

- The general rule is that to form the possessive (genitive) singular we add an apostrophe + **s**, while to form the possessive plural of a plural word ending in **s** we add only an apostrophe. If the plural does not end in an **s** (e.g. *women, people*) we add an apostrophe + **s** (e.g. *women's rights, the people's opinions*).

- Where the possessive apostrophe is needed, it is usually possible to paraphrase with 'of' or 'belonging to' as in:

  - *John's skateboard* (the skateboard belonging to John). However, other paraphrases are possible, as in:

  - *the judge's sentence* – the sentence passed by the judge;

  - *two hours' flight* – flight lasting two hours.

- Where ownership is involved, a writer simply needs to think who (or what) something belongs to, and put the apostrophe after the owner. This avoids the singular/plural issues.

- Conventions relating to the use of the apostrophe are changing as they have done since its introduction from French in the sixteenth century. The traditional rule for the singular of words ending in **s** is to add apostrophe + s, as in *Dickens's* or *Jones's*. Modern usage allows the use of an apostrophe only, particularly for words with another 's' in them (e.g. *Jesus' teaching*) to avoid spluttering. ICT conventions are exerting a pressure for simplification through omission. (L10.1)

Focus 7: Key words

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure the spellings of key words in each subject.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 1:

Spell common words correctly

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: subject-specific key words

Whole-class approaches

- Focus on spellings which pupils find difficult. Invent ways to remember those spellings.

- Provide regular spelling slots which feature key words from particular subjects taken from Appendix 2.

- Teach spellings in families, e.g. *chemical, chemistry, chemist*.

- Demonstrate how new words can be developed from ones already known, e.g. *industry – industrial – industrialisation*. (L10.1)

- Beat out the syllables, writing out each beat as you say it, e.g. *con-tin-ent*.

- Highlight the trickiest parts of words. Over-write them.

- Link new words with words or patterns already known.

- Develop a bank of words which mean different things in different subject areas, e.g. *acute.*

- Lead regular whole-class **look/say/remember/cover/write/check** starter activities with whiteboards to introduce the spelling of unfamiliar subject-specific vocabulary. Set this as a challenge, e.g:

  - write the word to be learned so everyone can see it;

  - all say the word and repeat it in an exaggerated way;

  - pupils copy the word down, naming each letter as they write to help them remember;

  - pupils keep saying the word several times to help memory (they should double check they have written it down correctly);

  - cover the word so no one can see it;

  - pupils write the word from memory;

  - repeat this three times;

  - discuss any problems and repeat steps;

  - after the whole-class activity, partners can help each other;

  - the class is then encouraged to decide on their own best individual strategies for remembering the words.

- Create a class poster/map, in which each country is a different subject. Fill each country with that subject's key words. (L10.1)

- Promote the use of thesauruses and dictionaries (general and subject-specific across all subjects).

- Play Hangman: pupils work in pairs or teams to correctly spell mystery key subject words written on the whiteboard.

Individual tasks

- Use a spelling log.

- Maintain subject or school glossary.

- Make a note of '*Words I need to learn and how I can remember them*'.

- Use new vocabulary, checking spelling in own work.

- Look for spelling patterns and rules.

- Remember spellings by altering the pronunciation to make the word memorable, e.g. *laboratory – lab-or-a-tory*.

- Use any conventions or rules that apply.

- Find words within words, e.g. *reign – foreign, sovereign*.

- Change the sound of the word by exaggeration, e.g. *rasp-berry*.

- Say letter names to a rhythmic beat, like a chant, e.g. *u-n-i-o-n*.

- Invent mnemonics, e.g. **G**et **R**ich **A**nd **P**lay **H**ard (**graph**).

- Trace the letters with a finger as you say the word.

- Learn the derivation of the word, e.g. *television, telephone, teleport*, etc.

- Use the **look/say/remember/cover/write/check** routine in pairs, testing each other as spelling partners.

Note

- See Appendix 2: Subject spelling lists.

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**Focus 8:
Personal spelling development**

To continue learning, constructing and checking spellings, and moving towards independence, pupils should be able to recognise and record personal errors, corrections, investigations, conventions, exceptions and new vocabulary.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

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Focus: spelling records

Whole-class approaches

- Give spelling logs a high profile in lessons through continual reference.

- Display and draw attention to the outcomes of spelling investigations.

- Discover and discuss which words cause the most problems for the most pupils. Decide on the top ten spelling challenges facing a particular class and develop mnemonics to secure correct spellings.

- Encourage proofreading, using OHT/whiteboard examples – anonymously if necessary.

Group tasks

- Pupils should have their own spelling journals to keep records of:

    - target words;

    - the outcomes of investigations;

    - rules and conventions;

    - reminders and mnemonics;

    - lists of helpful words;

    - key words that they continually find difficult (making a note of '*How I will remember this word*');

    - words they need, or wish, to learn;

    - common prefixes and suffixes;

    - endings that are determined grammatically, such as **ed** for past tense;

    - categories of words with the same pattern, e.g. prefix, suffix, difficult subject/words, etc;

    - helpful learning strategies;

    - ways to remember words;

    - ways to spell when they are unsure;

    - other vocabulary work.

Notes

- It is important that pupils use their journals as reference books as they write, to help them spell accurately in all their subjects, not just in English.

- Spelling logs can be useful in identifying key problems and making them manageable. Generalised exhortations such as '*Take more care with your spelling*', are of little help to pupils. It is far better to have specific individual targets drawn from the diagnostic analysis of errors.

- Having a positive self-image as a speller is important: spelling logs can demonstrate progress over time and give pupils the motivation to keep improving through strategies they can see have made a difference.

Focus: phonemes and syllables

Whole-class approaches

- Confirm that pupils can recognise phonemes, as distinct from syllables, and that they know that phonemes are the smallest unit of sound in a word. Have fun identifying the phonemes in words from the high-frequency lists, e.g. *d-i-a-r-y*.

- Explore syllabification. Pupils need to know that each beat in a word is a syllable and be able to distinguish syllables, e.g. *re-mem-ber*. This can be checked on by using response (or 'show me') cards labelled with numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The teacher says a word and pupils hold up a card to match the number of syllables.

- Clap out the syllables in words from particular subjects, e.g. musical instruments.

Group tasks

- Holding pair conversations in syllable-speak or phoneme-speak.

- Sorting words depending on the number of phonemes or syllables.

- Writing poems in which the first line of each verse has one syllable, the second line two syllables, etc.

Notes

- There are approximately 44 phonemes in English, but only 26 letters – hence many of the challenges of spelling.

- Clarify the distinction between **digraphs** (two letters make one sound, e.g. *sh*, *th*) and **blends** (two letters make two sounds). The latter require clear segmentation in sounding out.

- The Literacy Progress Unit on phonics includes a number of games and activities which help pupils to recognise and spell phonemes.

Focus 10: Analogy

To continue learning, constructing and checking spellings, and moving towards independence, pupils should be able to draw on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: using analogy, word groupings and spelling patterns

Whole-class approaches (L10.1)

- Feature all of the strategies listed below as starter activities, choosing words appropriate to the text(s) or the topic of the time:
  - identifying phonemes (e.g. *d-i-a-r-y*);
  - syllabification (e.g. *re-mem-ber*);
  - breaking a word into affixes (e.g. *dis + satisfy*);
  - linking with word families (e.g. *muscle/muscular*);
  - looking for words within words (e.g. *favOURite*);
  - referring to etymology (*bi + cycle = 2 + wheels*);
  - using analogy (*bright, right*, etc.);
  - creating word webs (e.g. *tele/phone*);
  - creating class word banks;
  - playing What Follows? on the board or flipchart.

Group tasks

- Create and complete word searches.
- Collect words with particular features and make posters with those words presented in a way that makes them memorable (e.g. calligram posters).
- Play word games such as Scrabble, Snap, etc.
- Keep a personal spelling log.
- Work with a spelling partner.
- Carry out spelling investigations.

Note

- See Appendix 3: Sample spelling investigations.

Focus: using visual strategies to improve spelling

Whole-class approaches

- Teach pupils how to look for the potential difficulties in words by highlighting on enlarged text, e.g. *definite, accommodation, necessary*.

- Using the spotlight tool on an interactive whiteboard, spot words within words, e.g. *our* and *favour* in *favourite*.

- Play What Follows? Write the first letter(s) of a word on the board, with dashes for the remaining letters. Pupils guess what follows, losing a point if they suggest a letter sequence not used in English. They do not lose a point if the suggested letter could have been used, and they prove this by writing up a word containing the suggested letter sequence. The apparent aim of the game is for the person at the board (not necessarily the teacher) to score ten points, or for the class to complete the word. The real aim of the game is to develop awareness of letter patterns.

- Collect and discuss words with 'silent' letters and suggest mnemonics.

- Try whole-class **look/say/remember/cover/write/check**.

Group tasks

- Establish spelling partners. Each pupil then reads his/her partner's writing and lists words that need learning. The partner decides if any might be learnt more easily by looking, rather than listening (see below), and finds other words which are linked visually with their partner's original words.

- Investigate 'silent' letters: different groups collect examples of 'silent' letters and research/speculate how these particular spellings have developed.

- Collect homonyms which, although identical in spelling, are different in pronunciation and in meaning, e.g. *minute*

beautiful	conscience	fiend	liaison	parliament	rhythm
benefited	cupboard	hymn	library	psyche	separate
chaos	description	jealous	medicine	psychiatrist	siege
character	environment	jewellery	miniature	psychologist	Wednesday
chemistry	February	knight	mnemonics	rhyme	

Focus 12: Using a dictionary

To continue learning, constructing and checking spellings, and moving towards independence, pupils should be able to use the quartiles of a dictionary and find words beyond the initial letter.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: using a dictionary effectively

Whole-class approaches (L10.1)

- Have a range of dictionaries in the classroom and use different ones for different reasons, e.g. etymological for word origins, rhyming dictionary.

- Tell the story of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* and of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), and share definitions from both.

- Have class 'word finder' contests to see who is the fastest to find particular words. Stress the use of quartiles, and of second and third place letters.

- Demonstrate the use and value of a thesaurus.

- Model effective use of a dictionary and thesaurus, and be seen to use them when appropriate.

Group tasks

- Create individual/group dictionaries of words from each subject.

- Have group 'word finder' contests.

- Investigate the qualities of different dictionaries and produce a group report for display.

Notes

- The novel *The Surgeon of Crowthorne* by Simon Winchester* provides fascinating insights into the creation of the OED.

- Dr Johnson's dictionary is available on CD-ROM to support focused dictionary work.

* S. Winchester – *The Surgeon of Crowthorne*. Penguin, 1998.

Focus 13: Spellcheckers

To continue learning, constructing and checking spellings, and moving towards independence, pupils should be able to make effective use of a spellchecker, recognising where it might not be sufficient or appropriate.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Focus: using a spellchecker

Whole-class approaches

- Remind pupils that using spellcheckers can be valuable, but is not always possible, e.g. in examinations, or for homophone errors.

- Celebrate the work of individual pupils whose work has benefited from the use of a spellchecker.

- Use an interactive whiteboard or computer to consolidate the use of spellchecker software and expect pupils to use spellcheckers when writing.

- Draw attention to a spellchecker's American tendencies if appropriate and ask more able pupils to provide any useful tips they may have to help others.

Group tasks

- Collaborative writing creates an ideal situation for using a spellchecker effectively. Pupils keep a note of words they need to check on, and learn them by choosing and using an appropriate strategy.

- Input personal spelling lists into hand-held spellcheckers so that they are featured in the games.

Appendix 1: Spelling list

The following list of spellings was compiled by a number of secondary schools which all identified the following words as commonly misspelled among this age group.

The list is not intended for blanket teaching, because most pupils will know how to spell most of the words, but it is recommended that early in Year 7 pupils should be helped to learn those spellings about which they are uncertain.

accommodation	evidence	possession
actually	exaggerated	potential
alcohol	explanation	preparation
although	February	prioritise
analyse/analysis	fierce	process
announcing	forty	proportion
argument	fulfil	proposition
assessment	furthermore	questionnaire
atmosphere	guard	queue
audible	happened	reaction
audience	health	receive
autumn	height	reference
beautiful	imaginary	relief
beginning	improvise	remember
believe	industrial	research
beneath	interesting	resources
buried	interrupt	safety
business	issue	Saturday
caught	jealous	secondary
chocolate	knowledge	separate
climb	listening	sequence
column	lonely	shoulder
concentration	lovely	sincerely
conclusion	marriage	skilful
conscience	material	soldier
conscious	meanwhile	stomach
consequence	miscellaneous	straight
continuous	mischief	strategy
creation	modern	strength
daughter	moreover	success
decide/decision	murmur	surely
definite	necessary	surprise
design	nervous	survey
development	original	technique
diamond	outrageous	technology
diary	parallel	texture
disappear	participation	tomorrow
disappoint	pattern	unfortunately
embarrass	peaceful	Wednesday
energy	people	weight
engagement	performance	weird
enquire	permanent	women
environment	persuade/persuasion	
evaluation	physical	

Common homophones and confusions

a lot/allot	heard/herd	saw/soar/sore
advise/advice	its/it's	see/sea
affect/effect	know/no	side/sighed
allowed/aloud	made/maid	sites/sights
be/bee	morning/mourning	source/sauce
bought/brought	new/knew	their/there/they're
braking/breaking	night/knight	threw/through
choose/chose	one/won	to/too/two
cloth/clothe	past/passed	way/weigh
conscience/conscious	practise/practice	what/watt
course/coarse	quiet/quite	where/we're/wear/were
days/daze	right/write	which/witch
died/dyed	road/rode	would/wood
for/four		your/you're

Appendix 2: Subject spelling lists

These lists of subject spellings were compiled by a number of secondary school departments. They identified the words listed below as being words that were often needed and often spelled incorrectly. Schools may use these suggestions as the basis for local lists suitable for their own topics and needs.

The list is not intended for blanket teaching, because all pupils will know how to spell some of the words. However, it is recommended that pupils should be helped to learn those spellings about which they are uncertain.

Art

abstract	easel	landscape
acrylic	exhibition	palette
charcoal	foreground	pastel
collage	frieze	perspective
collection	gallery	portrait
colour	highlight	sketch
crosshatch	illusion	spectrum
dimension	impasto	
display	kiln	

D and T

aesthetic	hygiene	presentation
brief	ingredient	production
carbohydrate	innovation	protein
component	knife/knives	recipe
design	linen	sew
diet	machine	specification
disassemble	manufacture	technology
evaluation	mineral	tension
fabric	natural	textile
fibre	nutrition	vitamin
flour	polyester	
flowchart	portfolio	

Drama

applause	freeze	rehearse/rehearsal
character/characteristics	improvise	role
costume	inspire	scene/scenario
curtain	lighting	script
director	movement	share
dramatise	perform/performance	spotlight
entrance	playwright	stage
exit	position	theatre/theatrical

English

adjective	dialogue	plural
advertise/advertisement	dramatic	prefix
advice/advise	emotion/emotive	preposition
alliteration	emphasise	punctuation
analyse/analysis	exclamation	quotation
apostrophe	explain/explanation	research
atmosphere	expression	resolution
chapter	figurative	rhyme
character/characterise	genre	scene
chorus	grammar	similarly
clause	highlight	simile
cliché	imagery	soliloquy
comma	juxtaposition	stanza
comparison	metaphor	subordinate
conclusion	myth	suffix
conjunction	narrative/narrator	synonym
consonant	onomatopoeia	synopsis
convention	pamphlet	tabloid
convey	paragraph	technique
criticism	personification	tension
demonstrate	persuade/persuasion	vocabulary
describe/description	playwright	vowel

Geography

abroad	function	poverty
amenity	globe	provision
atlas	habitat	region/regional
authority	infrastructure	rural
climate	international	settlement
contour	landscape	situation
country	latitude	tourist/tourism
county	location	transport/transportation
desert	longitude	urban
employment	nation/national	wealth
erosion	physical	weather
estuary	pollution	

History

agriculture/agricultural	defence	politics/political
bias	disease	priest
castle	document	propaganda
cathedral	dynasty	Protestant
Catholic	economy/economical	rebel/rebellion
chronology/chronological	emigration	reign
citizen	government	religious
civilisation	immigrant	republic
colony/colonisation	imperial/imperialism	revolt/revolution
conflict	independence	siege
constitution/constitutional	invasion	source
contradict/contradiction	motive	trade
current	parliament	traitor

ICT

binary	hardware	network
byte	icon	output
cable	input	password
cartridge	interactive	preview
CD-ROM	interface	processor
computer	internet	program
connect/connection	justify	scanner
cursor	keyboard	sensor
data/database	megabyte	server
delete	memory	software
disk	modem	spreadsheet
document	module	virus
electronic	monitor	
graphic	multimedia	

Library

alphabet/alphabetical	extract	novel
anthology	fantasy	photocopy
article	genre	publisher
author	glossary	relevant/relevance
catalogue	index	romance
classification	irrelevant/irrelevance	section
content	librarian	series
copyright	magazine	system
dictionary	non-fiction	thesaurus
editor		

Mathematics

addition	estimate	positive
adjacent	equation	quadrilateral
alternate	fraction	questionnaire
angle	graph	radius
amount	guess	ratio
approximately	horizontal	recurring
average	isosceles	reflect/reflection
axis/axes	kilogram	regular/irregular
calculate	kilometre	rhombus
centimetre	litre	rotate/rotation
circumference	measure	square
corresponding	metre	subtraction
co-ordinate	minus	symmetry/symmetrical
decimal	multiply/multiplication	tonne
degree	negative	triangle/triangular
denominator	numerator	vertex/vertices
diameter	parallel/parallelogram	vertical
digit	percentage	volume
divide/division	perimeter	weight
equilateral	perpendicular	

Music

choir	melody	scale
chord	minim	score
chromatic	minor	semibreve
composition/conductor	musician	synchronise
crotchet	octave	syncopation
dynamics	orchestra/orchestral	tempo
harmony	ostinato	ternary
instrument/instrumental	percussion	timbre
interval	pitch	triad
lyric	quaver	vocal
major	rhythm	

PE

active/activity	injury	qualify
agile/agility	league	relay
athletic/athlete	medicine	squad
biceps	mobile/mobility	tactic
exercise	muscle	tournament
field	personal	triceps
gym/gymnastic	pitch	
hamstring	quadriceps	

PSHE

able/ability	effort	racism/racist
achieve/achievement	emotion/emotional	reality
addict/addiction	encourage/encouragement	relationship
approve/approval	gender	represent/ representative
communication	generous/generosity	reward
control	involve/involvement	sanction
dependent/dependency	prefer/preference	sexism/sexist
discipline	pressure	stereotype
discussion		

RE

baptism	Hindu/Hinduism	prophet
Bible/biblical	hymn	religious/religion
Buddhist/Buddhism	immoral/immorality	shrine
burial	Islam	sign
celebrate/celebration	Israel	Sikh/Sikhism
ceremony	Judaism/Jewish	special
Christian	marriage	spirit/spiritual
commandment	miracle	symbol
commitment	moral/morality	synagogue
creation	Muslim	temple
disciple	parable	wedding
faith	pilgrim/pilgrimage	worship
festival	pray/prayer	
funeral	prejudice	

Science

absorb	exchange	organism
acid	freeze	oxygen
alkaline	frequency	particles
amphibian	friction	predator
apparatus	function	pressure
chemical	growth	reproduce
circulate/circulation	hazard	respire/respiration
combustion	insect	solution
condensation	laboratory	temperature
cycle	liquid	thermometer
digest/digestion	mammal	vertebrate
element	method	vessel
evaporation	nutrient	

Appendix 3: Sample spelling investigations

EXAMPLE 1: a small-group investigation into the formation of plurals

Focus: Pluralisation

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure pluralisation, including **es** endings, and words ending in **y**, **f** and vowels.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Prompts

1. Cut up the words so they are still in pairs, i.e. *ash* and *ashes* on one card.

2. Work out how you decide whether to add **s** or **es** to the end of a word.

3. Make two lists – those ending in **s** and those ending in **es**.

4. Look carefully at the **es** list and make new groups for different endings, e.g. words ending in **x**.

5. Read the **es** list aloud. What can you hear?

6. Try saying the **es** words without the **e**. Why is this difficult?

7. Write a rule about which endings need an **es**, and check it by trying it on other words you know.

8. Try clapping out the syllables in your **es** list. What happens when you add **es**? Does the same thing happen to words in the **s** column?

9. Look closely at the list of words ending in **s**. What rules can you work out for adding **s** to words ending in **e**, **y** and other letters?

10. Make your own list of words ending in **f**. Can you work out what happens to these when you add **s**?

army	armies	dish	dishes	pen	pens
ash	ashes	display	displays	penny	pennies
baby	babies	donkey	donkeys	pocket	pockets
berry	berries	fly	flies	puppy	puppies
book	books	fox	foxes	ray	rays
box	boxes	game	games	sandwich	sandwiches
boy	boys	glass	glasses	school	schools
brush	brushes	hat	hats	shoe	shoes
bush	bushes	inch	inches	table	tables
church	churches	jelly	jellies	tax	taxes
city	cities	key	keys	time	times
clasp	clasps	kiss	kisses	toy	toys
day	days	lip	lips	watch	watches
delay	delays	monkey	monkeys	window	windows
desk	desks	party	parties	witch	witches

Notes

- Most words add **s**. Add **es** if the word ends in a hissing/buzzing/shushing sound. Another way to remember this is to add **es** if you can hear an extra syllable when you make it plural. (The **e** is added to make the plural easier on the tongue, putting a buffer between too many **s** sounds.)

- Words ending in **e** – just add **s**.

- Words ending in **y** – add **s** if the final letter is preceded by a vowel. If not, change the **y** to **i** and add **es**.

EXAMPLE 2: a teacher-led whole-class investigation **into** ing **endings**

Focus: Word endings

These activities will enable pupils to revise, consolidate and secure word endings, including vowel suffixes such as **ing**; consonant suffixes such as **ful**; modifying words ending in **y** or **e**; making choices between similar endings such as **cian**, **sion** and **tion**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Prompts

1. Look at my list of words (see column 1). How would I change *clean* to *cleaning*? *See* to *seeing*? etc. Amend to become column 2.

2. If in doubt, just add **ing**. Most words follow this pattern.

3. Here are some words (see columns 3 and 4) which do something rather odd when we add **ing**. What happens? Can you work out why this happens? What do they have in common? Further prompt: look at the sound before the double letter.

4. Words which have a short (rap) vowel before the final consonant double the final consonant. It's useful for readers too – they can see that the vowel is short.

5. Here's another group of words (see columns 5 and 6 – split digraphs) which do something different. What happens?

6. Does our other rule still hold good in this list? (Short vowels create doubles, long vowels don't.) The rule does hold good.

7. Tell me three rules about adding **ing**, completing these sentences:
    -   Most words…
    -   A short (rap) vowel just before the end tells us…
    -   Most words ending in **e** will…

Simple – add **ing**		Short vowels – double		Drop **e** + add **ing**	
1	2	3	4	5	6
ask	asking	chat	chatting	bite	biting
clean	cleaning	clap	clapping	care	caring
do	doing	fit	fitting	decide	deciding
dream	dreaming	hop	hopping	drive	driving
go	going	hug	hugging	hope	hoping
jump	jumping	let	letting	make	making
pack	packing	plan	planning	save	saving
say	saying	run	running	share	sharing
send	sending	shop	shopping	shine	shining
think	thinking	shut	shutting	take	taking
walk	walking	skip	skipping	write	writing

Notes

- Most words just add **ing**.

- Most words ending in **e** drop the **e** to add **ing**. (Caution: the dropped **e** applies to split digraphs. It doesn't apply to other **e** endings – *seeing, being, freeing* – but as these are all high-frequency words, pupils don't usually suffer confusion about this. It is probably best to leave it unless pupils raise it or start making the error.)

EXAMPLE 3: an investigation into changing nouns into verbs (and verbs into nouns) for use with small groups of pupils

Focus: Word endings

These activities will help pupils to revise, consolidate and secure word endings, including vowel suffixes such as **ing**; consonant suffixes such as **ful**; modifying words ending in **y** or **e**; making choices between similar endings such as **cian**, **sion** and **tion**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Group tasks

1. Distribute a list of base words to pupils (see below).

2. Pupils sort the words into nouns and verbs, noting which words can be both.

3. Pupils convert nouns into verbs and verbs into nouns, identifying and listing the suffixes which are commonly used for this (see below).

4. Pupils generate further lists based on the suffixes.

Base words			Verb to noun	Noun to verb
age	escape	music	er	ate
art	happy	reduce	ism	en
change	hate	simple	ist	ify
class	help	television	ity	ise
compose	legal		ness	
criminal	love		ology	
critic	magnet		tion	
decide	medicine			
educate	mobile			

Note

*   Word class is determined by the function of a word in context – hence the possibility for words like *love* or *hate* to be a noun or a verb.

EXAMPLE 4: group investigations into prefixes with classical origins

Focus: Prefixes

These activities will enable pupils to revise, consolidate and secure prefixes, including antonym prefixes, e.g. **ir**, **un**.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Group tasks (L10.1)

1. Give one group four words starting with **bi**. What do they mean? Tell pupils that **bi** means a certain number. Can they work out what the number is? It was once a Greek word, which we borrowed. Can they think of any more words containing **bi**?

2. Give another group four words starting with **aqua**. Can they work out what **aqua** means and explain how they worked it out? Can they think of other words with **aqua** in them?

3. Invite pupils to think about the word **super**. It was once a Latin word for 'greater'. Can pupils think of any words with **super** in them? Why do they mean 'greater'?

4. What other roots can they spot in their reading, e.g. **cycle**, **ped**, **nova**, **bio**, **geo**, **phon**, **visi**. Can they work out their meanings?

Some useful examples to start with					
aqua	water	aquarium	Aquarius	aquatic	aquaplane
auto	self	automatic	autograph	autobiography	automobile
bi	two	bicycle	biped	binoculars	binary
port	carry	transport	portable	import	export
super	greater	supernatural	superman	supernova	superpower
tele	far off	telephone	television	telepathy	telecommunications
trans	across	transport	transplant	transfer	transaction

Notes

*   Word root spellings are generally reliable, so they are useful for spelling. The word *bicycle* is a good example – the roots clarify where to place the **i** and **y**.

*   Build on from here by using the common prefixes and suffixes, e.g. **re**, **pre**, **able**, etc.

*   Extend the investigation to suffixes with classical origins, e.g. **phobia**, **ology**.

EXAMPLE 5: a group investigation into the choice between ie and ei

Focus: Strategies for learning spelling

To continue learning, constructing and checking spellings, and move towards independence, pupils should be able to identify words which pose a particular challenge and learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory reinforcement and memorising critical features.

Year 7 9.3 Aspect 2:

Increase knowledge of word families, roots, derivations, morphology and regular spelling patterns

Year 8 9.3 Aspect 2:

Apply knowledge of spelling skills and strategies with increasing independence

Group tasks

1. Groups generate a list of words, or use the one below, in which **i** and **e** are adjacent, and search for patterns. Remind pupils that both digraphs can make different sounds, some of which overlap.

2. Discuss findings.

3. Create a poster to advertise guidelines for choosing the correct digraph.

4. Find as many ways of sounding **ie** as possible, with examples.

ie			cei	ei (long a)	ei (other)
belief	lie	priest	ceiling	eight	either
brief	medieval	quiet	conceit	foreign	height
chief	mischief	relief	deceit	freight	heir
die	niece	review	perceive	neighbour	neither
field	obedient	shield	receipt	reign	protein
fierce	patient	shriek	receive	rein	their
fiery	pie	thief		sovereign	weird
friend	piece	tie			
grief	pier	view			
handkerchief	pierce	yield			

Notes

- Most words use **ie**.

- **ie** is the only word-ending.

- **ei** is the only word-beginning.

- **c** is usually followed by **ei** (*ancient*, *glacier* and *science* are exceptions).

- The long **a** sound generally indicates **ei**. Note that the long **a** pronunciation has drifted a little over time, and is also influenced by accent.

- Other common **ei** words (see chart, final column) are best memorised by exception.

Appendix 4: Assessing pupils' progress (APP) spelling criteria

APP Writing assessment focus 8: Use correct spelling

WAF8 APP criteria						
Level 2	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**	**Level 6**	**Level 7**	**Level 8**
In some forms of writing, usually correct spelling of: • high-frequency grammatical function words • common single morpheme content/lexical words	**In most writing, correct spelling of:** • some common grammatical function words • common content/lexical words with more than one morpheme, including compound words	**Across a range of writing, correct spelling of:** • most common grammatical function words+, including adverbs with –ly formation (pp.27, 49-50, 72) • regularly formed content/lexical ++ words, including those with multiple morphemes* (pp.49-50, 52-53, 60-68) • most past and present tense inflections, (p. 54) plurals (pp.14-20, 69-70)	**Across a range of writing, correct spelling of:** • grammatical function words • almost all inflected** words (pp.21-32, 70-71) • most derivational suffixes (pp.21-32, 70-71) and prefixes (pp. 33-38, 43-44, 73) • most content/ lexical words (pp.43-46, 52-53, 62-68)	**Across a range of writing, generally correct spelling throughout, including some:** • ambitious, uncommon words (pp.43-44, 57, 60-61) • words with complex sound/symbol relationships (pp.6, 8, 41-42) • words with unstressed syllables (pp.57, 60) • multiletter vowel and consonant symbols (pp. 39-40)	**Across a range of writing, correct spelling throughout**	**Across a range of writing, correct spelling throughout**
likely errors: • inflected endings, e.g. past tense, plurals, adverbs • phonetic attempts at vowel digraphs	**likely errors:** • some inflected endings, e.g. past tense, comparatives, adverbs • some phonetically plausible attempts at content/lexical words	**likely errors:** • homophones of some common grammatical function words (pp. 39-40, 47-48, 60-61) • occasional phonetically plausible spelling in content/lexical words	**likely errors:** • occasional phonetically plausible spelling of unstressed syllables in content words • double consonants in prefixes (p.10)	**likely errors:** • occasionally in complex words such as *outrageous, exaggerated, announcing, parallel*		

+ grammatical function words, e.g. *noun, verb, adverb, adjective, possessive pronoun*, etc.

++ lexical – of or relating to items of vocabulary in a language; lexicon – a list of terms relating to a particular subject

* morpheme – a speech element having a meaning or grammatical function that cannot be subdivided into further such elements, e.g. plural morpheme 's'

** inflected words – a change in the form of a word, signalling change in grammatical function, such as tense, person, gender, number, e.g. *walk, walked*

Appendix 5: Application of learning spelling to other areas of the curriculum

- Display spelling strategies in all classrooms.

- Promote spelling booklets/journals per subject (or cross-curricular spelling journals).

- Promote unit spellings, so that pupils are learning the words which are pertinent to a unit of work, avoiding decontextualised spelling tests.

- Promote use of thesauruses and dictionaries (general and subject-specific); ask pupils to keep a record of how often they have used a dictionary/thesaurus in various subjects across the week. Discuss in English lessons why and how such dictionary work helped them in their work.

- Promote proofreading and spelling correction time in all subjects; allow pupils time in class to self-monitor spelling in a piece of work they have just completed. They should cross out misspellings and write the correct word in a different colour.

- Use starter activities where pupils have to proofread and correct their spellings under strict time constraints.

- Set personal spelling targets to be reviewed by the form tutor each term.

- Ask pupils to bring examples of their spelling journals from other subjects for discussion in English and explore how well they are applying the taught spelling strategies across the curriculum.

- Ask all pupils to have a spelling partner in all subject areas who can test them on their personal list.

- Use knowledge gained in history when studying invasions (such as the Anglo-Saxons, Romans, French and so on) when discussing language and spelling development in English lessons (L10.1).

- Ask pupils to make spelling links with other languages they may be studying, for example words for motorways: *autoroute* (French); *autobahn* (German); *autopista* (Spanish); *autoput* (Serbo-Croat) (L10.1).

- Ask pupils to apply their knowledge of prefixes to help with spellings and understanding in other subject areas, such as in physical education: *substitute, disallow, intercept*, and so on.

Taken from *Teaching for progression*: Writing (Ref: 00750-2008PDF-EN-02).

Appendix 6: Marking spelling

How spelling is marked is crucial to maintaining pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Many pupils believe they are bad spellers and this hinders their learning. The following are some useful strategies, which may help, based on the guiding principle of Assessment for Learning (AfL). This involves regular planned activities and opportunities based on diagnostic analysis, which encourage pupils to reflect on spelling and to review their own progress as spellers for themselves. Personalisation is at the heart of this process, as pupils are encouraged to work with increasing independence to set targets for themselves based on a shared understanding of spelling conventions and a range of strategies to facilitate further improvement.

Strategies for teachers using AfL approaches

- Adopt a diagnostic approach to spelling, ensuring that teachers are aware of how pupils approach words, and of which high-frequency words and patterns they know.

- Use AfL approaches throughout lessons, e.g. whiteboards, letter fans, response cards, traffic lights, to determine which pupils require further help with a particular focus.

- Make marking criteria explicit, e.g. 'When I mark your work I shall look at how you have used subject-specific vocabulary/the "ful" ending/homophones…'.

- Mark selectively – mark for spelling targets or focus attention on those spellings/patterns/strategies which coincide with the meaning and purpose or specific teaching focus of current work, e.g. specific vocabulary used when writing about literature, and comment on these constructively.

- Select high-value features for marking, commenting on features from which the pupil can generalise, and apply the advice given to other tasks, e.g. the use of **s/es** plurals; homophones, etc.

- Focus the marking of spelling around pupils' targets and reward progress made.

- Give specific prompts which tell pupils exactly where and what they need to improve.

- Set a target for 'tricky words' that are likely to be used in a particular piece of writing and reward those who meet it. Focus the marking of spelling to reinforce the recent teaching of this objective.

- Avoid over-marking of adventurous spelling choices as this can lead to a lack of confidence. Make a note of patterns of error and either set related personal targets or cover these through whole-class work or in guided work as appropriate.

- Use guided work with a targeted group of pupils to analyse their pattern of spelling errors and agree targets and strategies for improvement. When marking written work, identify words for correction that are to become target words for the pupil's spelling journal. Reward progress made on target words.

- Teach pupils the more ambitious and sophisticated vocabulary which will be needed in the next writing task and ask them to identify strategies for learning the words. Tell them you will be marking for this as well as for content.

- When demonstrating writing, occasionally introduce a deliberate spelling error and ask pupils to tell you how to correct it and what strategy could be used to spell it correctly.

- Explain to pupils how and why you correct spellings in their written work.

- Model how to respond to spelling errors identified in written work by the teacher, applying spelling strategies to learn correct spellings.

- Promote effective use of dictionary, thesaurus or spellchecker and remind pupils to use during writing.

- Lead whole-class **look/say/remember/cover/write/check** and then encourage each pupil to devise strategies for remembering 'tricky' spellings.

- Make pupils' target words a focus for marking written work.

- Model the use of personal spelling journals and how to keep records of target words, helpful conventions and strategies, and key words which they find particularly difficult, to inform their writing.

- Model techniques for effective proofreading, applying knowledge of effective spelling conventions and strategies and giving them strategies such as highlighting words they are not sure about, reading aloud to a partner and reading work backwards.

- Allocate some class time to establish the habit of proofreading written work before handing it in. Use starter activities to help pupils to practise proofreading their work for spelling errors under strict time constraints as practice for examinations.

- Show pupils how to do an analysis of their own spelling difficulties and help them to set personal spelling targets.

Activities to support pupil peer and self-assessment

- Build in regular opportunities for pupil response to marking, and expect pupils to respond to the prompts, through active involvement with target setting.

- Ask pupils to respond to your marking of certain incorrect spellings by explaining what strategies they are going to use to learn the word.

- Reward pupils who show evidence that they are taking responsibility for improving the accuracy of their spelling.

- Play Flash Spelling following the return of marked written work, the teacher allows time for pupils to study the comments and enter target spellings. With books closed, pupils have to write their new target words on whiteboards and display to the teacher for a visual check.

- Develop a marking policy for pupils so that they can then proofread each other's work using given codes for this.

- Establish a system of spelling partners so that pupils can support each other towards the achievement of their personal spelling targets, e.g. testing on personal target words/key words, proofreading each other's written work and listing further spelling errors that can be targeted and strategies for learning. The teacher should monitor this process.

- Pupils develop their own lists of words to learn, on which their spelling partner tests them, and the teacher monitors this process.

- Establish the routine of writing corrected spellings into spelling journals as target words to be learned.

- Pupils can audit errors in high-frequency words by trawling through exercise books, working in pairs. Each pupil draws up their own target list of words for inclusion in their spelling journal and these are also written in English books as a marking focus for the teacher.

- Ensure pupils use spelling journals while drafting and proofreading their writing.

- Expect pupils to have self-checked their work before it is handed in – provide a self-check prompt sheet. Give clear advice and expect pupils to carry it out.

- Introduce a pupil self-checking/spelling analysis sheet for use across all subjects to help pupils to monitor their own progress towards targets or capture their own uncertainties.

Taken from *Teaching for progression*: Writing (Ref: 00750-2008PDF-EN-02).

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